Social Scientific Thinking I
POLI 500
Fall 2018

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Course Description

In this course and the research practicum offered next semester you will begin to learn how to conduct basic research in social science. I will focus on the issues of theory construction, research design, and measurement, as well as how best to communicate your research to the scholarly community. The goal is that by the end of the year you should be able to design and conduct a variety of research projects, to read the professional literature competently, and to pass the "basic tools" exam.

Overview of Your Obligations

This is a seminar. You are expected to have read all of the assigned readings before the beginning of the seminar and, thus, be able to participate in class discussions. Each student will be an active participant in the seminar. I cannot overemphasize the importance of consistent and meaningful seminar participation. You may hate speaking up (or somehow think that whatever you have to say is silly), but you are entering into a profession where being able to articulate an idea is crucial. The seminar is a good place to develop and hone your skills.

Throughout the semester you will have written assignments. The nature of the written work will vary as to the topic under discussion changes. These papers are due via email (rkw@rice.edu) by 11:59 a.m. on Monday. Unless you have a verified excuse, papers arriving after the deadline will be regarded with ill humor and may not be credited.

You will be required to make presentations to the class. Sometimes, but not always, these presentations will be based on your written work. Presentations are different from normal class participation. You will be told about presentations ahead of time.

Components of Your Final Grade

Class participation	20%
Written assignments	30%
Presentations	20%
Final Project	30%

Texts

You will probably want to own all of the following.

King, Gary, Robert O. Keohane, and Sidney Verba. 1994. *Designing Social Inquiry: Scientific Inference in Qualitative Research*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. [KKV]

Clarke, Kevin A. and David M. Primo. 2012. *A Model Discipline: Political Science and the Logic of Representation*. Oxford University Press.

Heinrich, Bernd. 1989. *Ravens in Winter*. Vintage Books.

Sword, Helen. 2012. *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Reading Assignments.

As noted above, you are obligated to read what is assigned. As young scholars you are expected to read beyond what is assigned. If something strikes your fancy, then pursue it! Most, but not all, of the readings are on Canvas.

Cooperating on Assignments.

In this class there may be group assignments in which you may divide up the tasks in the assignment in any way you wish. All members of the group will receive the same grade on these assignments. On all other assignments I expect each student to work independently.

Honor Code.

Rice has an Honor System. The Honor System places a great deal of trust -- but also responsibility -- on the student. All graded work in this course is covered by the Honor System. In each case I will explain what limitations and restrictions you should observe.

Special Needs

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to contact me as soon as possible, preferably during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities need to also contact Rice Disability Support Services in room 122 of the Ley Student Center [713-348-]5841; adarice@rice.edu). Fax: (713) 348 - 5199. If calling from a TTY/TDD, dial 711 or 800-735-2989 to be connected through a relay operator.

Key Dates

September 11 – turn in your research paper statement
October 2 – Literature review and hypotheses
November 13 – Research Design
November 27 – Class presentations of research paper
December 12 – Final draft of research paper

Course Outline.

Note: Readings are subject to change. Keep current with the syllabus.

August 21: Introduction

Cowl, Clayton T, Michael P Jones, Charles F Lynch, Nancy L Sprince, Craig Zwerling, and Lawrence J Fuortes. "Factors Associated with Fatalities and Injuries from Hot-Air Balloon Crashes." *Jama-Journal of the American Medical Association* 279, no. 13 (1998): 1011-14.

Orme-Johnson, David W, Charles N Alexander, John L Davies, Howard M Chandler, and Wallace E Larimore. "International Peace Project in the Middle East: The Effects of the Maharishi Technology of the Unified Field." *Journal of conflict resolution* 32, no. 4 (1988): 776-812.

August 28: Experimental Method – the Gold Standard

Morton, Rebecca B., and Kenneth C. Williams. *Experimental Political Science and the Study of Causality: From Nature to the Lab*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Chapters 1-4

McDermott, Rose. "Internal and External Vailidity." In *The Handbook of Experimental Political Science*, edited by James N. Druckman, Donald P. Green, James H. Kuklinski and Arthur Lupia, 27-40. Boston: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Munger, Michael. 2010. "10 Tips on How to Write Less Badly" Chronicle of Higher Education. http://chronicle.com/article/10-Tips-on-How-to-Write-Les/124268/

Gustafsson, Karl, and Linus Hagström. "What Is the Point? Teaching Graduate Students How to Construct Political Science Research Puzzles." *European Political Science* (2018): 1-15.

Sword. Chapters 1, 2 and 3.

September 4: Inductive Reasoning

Heinrich, Bernd. *Ravens in Winter*: Simon and Schuster, 2014.

September 11: Hypothetico-Deductive Reasoning

Your research paper statement is DUE

KKV, Chapters 1, 2.

Popper, Karl. "Science: Conjectures and Refutations" In *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*: Routledge, 2014. (pp. 33-58)

Popper, Karl. "The Demarcation Between Science and Metaphysics" In *Conjectures and Refutations: The Growth of Scientific Knowledge*: Routledge, 2014. (pp. 253-292)

Sword. Chapters 4, 5.

September 18: Normal Science and Paradigms

Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*: University of Chicago Press, 2012.

September 25: Research Program(mes)

Lakatos, Imre. "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes." In *Criticism and the growth of knowledge* 4 (1970): 170-196.

Feyerabend, Paul K. "The Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes" In *Problems of Empiricism*. Vol. 2, Philosophical Papers: Cambridge University Press, 1985.

Elman, Colin, and Miriam Fendius Elman. "How Not to Be Lakatos Intolerant: Appraising Progress in IR Research." *International Studies Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (2002): 231-62.

Sword. Chapters 6, 7, 8.

October 2: A Link Between Theory and Empirics

Your literature review and hypotheses statement is DUE

Clarke, Kevin A., and David M. Primo. *A Model Discipline: Political Science and the Logic of Representations*: Oxford University Press, 2012.

October 9: Midterm Break

October 16: Explanation and Prediction

Friedman, Milton. "The Methodology of Positive Economics." In Hausman, Daniel M. *The Philosophy of Economics: An Anthology*. 3rd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Brodbeck, May. "Explanation, Prediction, and" Imperfect" Knowledge." In *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*, edited by May Brodbeck, 231-72: University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 1969.

Sword. Chapter 9, 10.

Jacqueline Stevens. 2012. "Political Scientists are Lousy Forecasters." Editorial, New York Times. Sunday June 26, 2012
http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/24/opinion/sunday/political-scientists-are-lousy-forecasters.html?_r=1

Henry Farrell. June 24, 2012. "Why the Stevens Op-Ed is Wrong." The Monkey Cage.
http://themonkeycage.org/blog/2012/06/24/why-the-stevens-op-ed-is-wrong/

October 23: Causality and Inference for Observational Data

KKV. Chapters 3 and 4

Gerring, John. "Causation: A Unified Framework for the Social Sciences." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 17, no. 2 (2005): 163-98.

Sword. Chapters 11-12

October 30: Impediments to Inference

KKV – Chapters 5 and 6.

Geddes, Barbara. "How the Cases You Choose Affect the Answers You Get: Selection Bias in Comparative Politics." *Political Analysis* 2 (1990): 131-50.

Angrist, Joshua D., and Jorn-Steffen Pischke. "The Credibility Revolution in Empirical Economics: How Better Research Design Is Taking the Con out of Econometrics." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 24, no. 2 (2010): 3-30.

Sword. Chapters 13, 14 and Afterward

November 6: Qualitative Research Designs

Gerring, John. "Qualitative Methods." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20, no. 1 (2017): 15-36.

Gerring, John. "What Is a Case Study and What Is It Good For?" *American political science review* 98, no. 2 (2004): 341-54.

Goffman, Alice. "On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto." *American Sociological Review* 74, no. 3 (2009): 339-57.

Lewis-Kraus, Gideon. "The Trials of Alice Goffman." *New York Times* 12 (2016).

November 13: Robustness and Replicability

Your research design statement is DUE

Humphreys, Macartan, Raul Sanchez de la Sera, and Peter ven der Windt. "Fishing, Commitment, and Communication: A Proposal for Comprehensive Nonbinding Research Registration." *Political Analysis* 21, no. 1 (2013): 1-20.

Ioannidis, John P. A. "Why Most Published Research Findings Are False." *PLoS medicine* 2, no. 8 (2005): e124.

Ioannidis, John P. A. "Why Most Discovered True Associations Are Inflated." *Epidemiology* (2008): 640-48.

Laitin, David D, and Rob Reich. "Trust, Transparency, and Replication in Political Science." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 50, no. 1 (2017): 172-75.

Open Science Collaboration. "Estimating the Reproducibility of Psychological Science." *Science* 349, no. 6251 (2015).

Camerer, Colin F, Anna Dreber, Eskil Forsell, Teck-Hua Ho, Jürgen Huber, Magnus Johannesson, Michael Kirchler, Johan Almenberg, Adam Altmejd, and Taizan Chan. "Evaluating Replicability of Laboratory Experiments in Economics." *Science* 351, no. 6280 (2016): 1433-36.

Monroe, Kristen Renwick. "The Rush to Transparency: DA-RT and the Potential Dangers for Qualitative Research." *Perspectives on Politics* 16, no. 1 (2018): 141-48.

November 20: How the System Works (Journals, Peer Review, Editors)

Thunder, David. "Back to Basics: Twelve Rules for Writing a Publishable Article." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 37, no. 3 (2004): 493-95.

Miller, Beth, Jon Pevehouse, Ron Rogowski, Dustin Tingley, and Rick K. Wilson. "How to Be a Peer Reviewer: A Guide for Recent and Soon-to-Be-Phds." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 46, no. 1 (2013): 12-123.

Wilson, Rick K. "Publishing and the Seven Deadly Sins" https://rkwrice.wordpress.com/2014/04/08/publishing-and-the-seven-deadly-sins/

The Political Methodologist Special Issue on Peer Review (Fall 2015), pp. 2-24. URL: https://goo.gl/3kfa3e.

- Esarey, Justin. "Introduction to the Special Issue / Acceptance Rates and the Aesthetics of Peer Review."
- Nyhan, Brendan. "A Checklist Manifesto for Peer Review."
- Friere, Danilo. "Peering at Open Peer Review."
- Leeper, Thomas J. "The Multiple Routes to Credibility."
- Pepinsky, Thomas: "What is Peer Review For? Why Referees are not the Disciplinary Police."
- McLaughlin Mitchell, Sara: "An Editor's Thoughts on the Peer Review Process."
- Krupnikov, Yanna, and Adam Seth Levine. "Offering (Constructive) Criticism When Reviewing (Experimental) Research."

Nosek, Brian A., Jeffrey R. Spies, and Matt Motyl. "Scientific Utopia: Ii. Restructuring Incentives and Practices to Promote Truth over Publishability." *Perspectives on Psychological Science* 7, no. 6 (2012): 615-31.

November 27: Class Presentations

Class presentation of research paper DUE

December 12: Final Paper Due

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